

Electrostatic Dissipative Plastisols

5 Claim of Priority

 This application claims priority from U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/520,040 bearing Attorney Docket Number 12003026 and filed on November 14, 2003.

10 Field of the Invention

 This invention relates to plastisols that provide electrostatic dissipative properties.

Background of the Invention

15 Electrostatic dissipative (ESD) articles are vital to the manufacture of electronic components that are sensitive to static electricity, such as disk drives, semi-conductors, tape and reel assemblies, and electronic assemblies packaging.

 Inherently conductive polymers (ICP's) have been found to be very useful in a variety of electrically active materials, such as anti-fouling marine coatings;
20 anti-static fabrics, coatings and packaging; batteries; conductive inks; conductive adhesives; EMI/RFI shielding articles, radar or microwave absorption articles, and sensors.

 Inherently conductive polymers can be the matrix of the coating. More preferably because of cost, inherently conductive polymers are dispersed in an
25 inert binder to serve as the matrix or continuous phase of the coating.

Summary of the Invention

 What the art needs is a dispersion of inherently conductive polymers in an inert binder that also serves as a barrier after it is coated or molded on a
30 surface of an article. An example of such inert binder is a vinyl plastisol that is easy to use in a variety of articles that also require ESD properties and that is

environmentally friendly, relatively inexpensive, easy to apply, and good performing.

The present invention solves the problem in the art by providing a mixture of inherently conductive polymer in a vinyl plastisol.

5 One aspect of the invention is a mixture comprising inherently conductive polymer and a plastisol. Preferably, the mixture is as coatable or moldable as any other plastisol is, even though the mixture contains inherently conductive polymer.

10 An advantage of the present invention is the mixture is capable of being processed easily because the ICP does not appreciatively add to the viscosity of the plastisol, and certainly not as much as conductive carbon black adds to the viscosity of the plastisol.

Other advantages of the invention will become apparent when considering the embodiments of the invention.

15

Embodiments of the Invention

Inherently Conductive Polymers

20 Inherently conductive polymers suitable for the invention include polymers having repeating monomeric units of aniline, thiophene, pyrrole, phenyl mercaptan, and the like. Other examples include a conducting polymer selected from the group consisting of substituted and unsubstituted polyparaphenylenevinylenes, substituted and unsubstituted polyanilines, substituted and unsubstituted polyazines, substituted and unsubstituted
25 polythiophenes, substituted and unsubstituted polyparaphenylenes, substituted and unsubstituted poly-p-phenylene sulfides, substituted and unsubstituted polyfuranes, substituted and unsubstituted polypyrroles, substituted and unsubstituted polyselenophene, substituted and unsubstituted polyacetylenes, mixtures thereof, and copolymers thereof. These conductive polymers are
30 disclosed in a variety of patents, including U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,069,820 (Jen et al.);

5,160,457 (Elsenbaumer); 5,185,100 (Han et al.); 5,281,363 (Shacklette et al.); 5,378,403 (Shacklette); 5,422,423 (Shacklette et al.); 5,456,862 (Kwan-Yue et al.); 5,567,355 (Wessling et al.); 5,700,398 (Angelopoulos et al.) and 5,911,918 (Shacklette et al.). As described in these patents the inherently conductive polymer is often doped with an acid such as hydrochloric acid or p-toluene sulfonic acid.

Particularly preferred is a substituted polyaniline such as disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 5,968,417 (Visawanathan) and more particularly that marketed by PolyOne Corporation as Teslart™ inherently conductive polymers. This substituted polyaniline is lignosulfonic acid-grafted polyaniline.

Plastisol

The polymer processing art is quite familiar with vinyl plastisols. These plastisols are formed from dispersion-grade poly(vinyl chloride) (PVC) resins (homopolymers and copolymers) and plasticizers. Exemplary dispersion-grade PVC resins are disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,581,413; 4,693,800; 4,939,212; and 5,290,890, among many others such as those referenced in the above four patents.

The primary liquid plasticizers used in preparing fluid plastisols from dispersion-grade vinyl resins are organic esters of various acids such as phthalic, phosphoric, adipic, sebacic and the like. Of these, the phthalate esters are most frequently used as principal plasticizers for dispersion type vinyl chloride resins. Dialkyl phthalates containing medium length alkyl groups (e.g. from about 6 to about 12 carbon atoms in length) provide a good balance of plastisol properties when used in proportions from about 5 to about 120 parts by weight per 100 parts of the spray dried vinyl chloride resin powder. Specific examples of useful liquid plasticizers include dioctyl phthalate, butyl benzyl phthalate, dioctyl adipate, dibutyl sebacate, dinonyl phthalate and glyceryl stearates.

PolyOne Corporation (www.polyone.com) is a commercial source of vinyl plastisols for every consumer market. These dispersions of PVC resins in plasticizing liquids are enhanced by the addition of heat or light stabilizers, color pigments, flame retardants, blowing agents and other additives required for the intended product.

Vinyl plastisols are typically liquid at room temperature and can be poured, pumped, sprayed or cast, depending on the compound. These compounds can range in hardness from fishing lure plastisol with an 8 Durometer Shore A, to rotocasting plastisol (mostly PVC) with a 65 Durometer Shore D. Advantages of vinyl plastisol in coating and molding applications include ease of use and economy.

Alternatively, poly(methylmethacrylate) and its copolymers and plasticizers can be used as plastisols for the present invention.

Mixing of Inherently Conductive Polymers and Plastisols

Conventional mixing equipment is used to thoroughly mix the inherently conductive polymer into the plastisol.

The amount of inherently conductive polymer added to the plastisol can range from about 1 to about 50, and preferably from about 5 to about 25 weight percent of the total mixture.

Optional Ingredients

A variety of ingredients commonly used in the coatings industry can also be included in the mixture of the present invention. Non-limiting examples of such optional additives include slip agents, antiblocking agents, antioxidants, ultraviolet light stabilizers, quenchers, plasticizers, mold release agents, lubricants, antistatic agents, fire retardants, and fillers such as glass fibers, talc, chalk, or clay. Of these fillers, the properties of nanoclay can add stiffness, toughness, and charring properties for flame retardancy. Such optional additives can be included in the mixture of the present invention in an amount

from about 0 to about 95, and preferably from about 0.1 to about 50 weight percent. Most preferably, the amount is about 1 to about 40 weight percent of the mixture.

Any conventional colorant useful in coatings and paints is also acceptable for use in the present invention. Conventional colorants can be employed, including inorganic pigments such as titanium dioxide, iron oxide, chromium oxide, lead chromate, carbon black, silica, talc, china clay, metallic oxides, silicates, chromates, etc., and organic pigments, such as phthalocyanine blue, phthalocyanine green, carbazole violet, anthrapyrimidine yellow, flavanthrone yellow, isoindoline yellow, indanthrone blue, quinacridone violet, perylene reds, diazo red and others. The amount of colorant can range from none at all to about 40, and preferably from about 1.5 to about 20 weight percent of the mixture.

Graphite is also desirable as an optional ingredient to the mixture. The graphite can be natural or synthetically produced and in the form of platelets of commercially available, conventional size. The amount of graphite can range from about none at all to about 35, and preferably from about 10 to about 20 weight percent of the mixture. The graphite platelets have very low surface resistivities along their planar surfaces, which complements the particulate nature of the inherently conductive polymers for condensed packing of both types of materials in a film formed by the plastisol.

Usefulness of the Invention

All of the advantages and usefulness of a vinyl plastisol as disclosed in the three United States Patents above are also present in the mixture of the present invention. But the inherently conductive polymer ingredient adds to those properties by making the mixture electrically active and capable of serving as an electrostatic dissipative agent.

Surface resistivities, using the Four Point Probe test (ASTM D-257-99) can range from about 1×10^3 to about 1×10^{12} Ohms/square.

The use of vinyl plastisol to manufacture ESD articles is not adversely affected by the presence of ICP. Indeed, all of the conventional coating techniques for vinyl plastisols are also available for the present invention. This versatility would not be true if the vinyl plastisol were to be rendered
5 electrostatically dissipative via the addition of conductive carbon black or other electrostatic dissipative solids. The increase of viscosity caused by such electrostatic dissipative solids would reduce or eliminate the ability to use some or all of the following manufacturing techniques common to plastisol processing.

10 Dip Coating: When the plastisol coating becomes a functional part of the mold itself, the process is called dip coating. The metal insert may or may not have a requirement for an adhesive primer. Common uses include tool handles and grips; textiles; wire grates and baskets; plating racks; conveyor hooks; and the like. Dip coating can be either hot dipping or cold dipping.

15 Hot Dipping: By far the most common dip-coating processing technique, hot dipping requires an item to be heated first before immersion into the plastisol. The heat causes the plastisol coating to gel on the hot form.

 Cold Dipping: Preheating the metal part is not required; the amount of pickup obtained depends largely on the viscosity and thixotropic ration of the
20 plastisol.

 Molding: Several types of molding are common to plastisol applications. Slush Molding is used to produce hollow, flexible items by filling a mold with plastisol, heating sufficiently to gel a layer next to the inner mold surface, and then draining the excess plastisol. The gelled layer is then completely fused and
25 stripped from the mold. Rotational Molding involves hollow flexible or rigid forms with complex shapes. The process is done using a two-part mold filled with a predetermined weight of plastisol, inserted into a heated oven and rotated on two planes simultaneously. Dip Molding refers to the process of dipping a solid mold; gelling, fusing and stripping the hollow part. Open Molding is a

process of molding directly in, or into, a finished article such as automotive air filters.

Other Coating: Several types of coating employ movement of the plastisol relative to the item or the item relative to the plastisol. One skilled in the art readily can employ knife coating, roll coating, reverse roll coating, etc. according to techniques taught in encyclopedias, other technical literature, or the patent literature, without undue experimentation. One reason for such easy adaptation of the mixtures of the present invention to conventional plastisol coating is that the presence of inherently conductive polymer does not adversely affect viscosity of the mixture, and certainly not as much as a plastisol having conductive carbon black therein.

Vinyl plastisols can be certified for end-use automotive, FDA, UL, ASTM, NSF, USDA, military, medical or customer-specific applications.

Any article that needs ESD properties suitable for preparation from a vinyl plastisol can be prepared from the present invention. Non-limiting examples of ESD plastisol-made articles include belting, flooring, gloves, tray liners, and any other article that is used during the manufacturing of electronic components. Other uses include medical and pharmaceutical clean rooms to minimize accumulation of dust and other contaminants; environments where explosive materials as made or stored to minimize static discharge that might cause a spark that might ignite the explosive materials; other workplace uses where workers operate in low-humidity environments where static shock is a safety, health, or comfort issue; coated textiles (both woven and nonwoven); and conveyor belts and other automated transfer equipment in which static discharge could affect adversely any electronic device being transported or being used to monitor the transport process (including so-called "smart tags" on consumer goods).

Further embodiments are described in the following examples.

Examples

Table 1 shows the commercial ingredients used in Examples 1-5 and Comparison Example A.

Table 1 — Source of Ingredients					
Ingredient Name	Purpose	Brand Name	Generic Name	Commercial Source	Source Location
Vinyl Plastisol	Film former	150-255 Natural	PVC	PolyOne Corporation	Avon Lake, OH
Inherently Conductive Polymer	Electrostatic Dissipation	Teslart™	Lignosulfonic acid-grafted polyaniline	PolyOne Corporation	Avon Lake, OH
Graphite	Electrostatic Dissipation	5026	Graphite	Superior Graphite Co.	Chicago, IL

- 5 Table 2 shows the Recipes, Method of Preparation, and resulting Properties of Examples 1-3 of mixtures of the present invention.

Table 2			
Recipes, Preparation, and Properties			
Ingredient Name	Example 1	2	3
Recipes (in Parts)			
150-255 Vinyl Plastisol	100.00	100.00	100
Teslart™	17.19	17.19	8.59
Graphite	0	4.17	17.19
Preparation			
Mixing Equipment	Cowels	Cowels	Cowels
Mixing Temp.	Keep Below 35°C	Keep Below 35°C	Keep Below 35°C
Mixing Speed	200-500 RPM	200-500 RPM	200-500 RPM
Order of Addition of Ingredients	Prepared plastisol then mixed in Teslart followed by graphite	Prepared plastisol then mixed in Teslart followed by graphite	Prepared plastisol then mixed in Teslart followed by graphite
Form of Product After Mixing	Liquid Dispersion	Liquid Dispersion	Liquid Dispersion
Properties			
Brookfield Viscosity (ASTM D1824-95) 20 RPM, Spindle #6, Centipoise	16,000	22,000	11,500
Surface Resistivity (ASTM D257-99) Surface Resistance, Ohms/square	5.0 * 10E6	2.1 * 10E4	8.7 * 10E9

A review of Examples 1-3 shows that higher amounts of inherently
conductive polymer (Examples 1 and 2) decreases surface resistivity, as
compared with Example 3. Graphite added to the mixture decreased surface
5 resistivity but increased viscosity (Example 1 compared with Example 2).
Thus, from these data, one skilled in the art can customize a balance of surface
resistivity and viscosity according to the needs of a particular usage, all without
undue experimentation.

The invention is not limited to the above embodiments. The claims
10 follow.